

KĀSHMĪRĪ PROVERBS.

BY PANDIT ANAND KOUL, ŚRĪNAGAR, KASHMĪR.

Preface.

PROVERBS convey useful lessons of prudence and morality. They magnify the delights of virtue as well as paint in dark colours the consequences of evil. Their phraseology shows the impress of the mint of wisdom of immemorial antiquity. In short, they are "sense, shortness and salt," as quaintly defined by Howell.

The Kāshmirī is extremely fond of saws pragmatic and maxims sage. His language perhaps contains a greater number of them than that of any other Oriental. They mirror not merely his external conduct, daily life and environment, but also the disposition of his mind. In 1885, a large collection of proverbs and sayings, current in Kashmir, was made by the Rev. J. Hinton Knowles, which he explained from the rich and interesting folklore of the valley. He afterwards published them in the form of a book, which is very interesting, equally to the philologist, the ethnologist and the antiquarian. But there remained some proverbs which the Rev. Mr. Knowles could not find at the time of writing his book. These I have collected, and now publish with translations in English.

It is gratifying to note that these precious fruits of ancient wisdom, which by mere oral transmission and currency were being gradually lost, or were changing their complexion with the tide of time, are now being committed to print, and thus placed on permanent record.

Achiv khuta chī kuṭhī dūr.

The knees are farther than the eyes. (Blood is thicker than water.)

Ak ḍuḍa biyi māji kyut tok.

An uninvited guest, and he wants a plateful [of food] for his mother [in addition to feeding himself]! (Brazenness.)

Ak hammāmi ta byāk damāmi.

One is the servant of the hot-bath and the other is the assistant for heating it. (Conspiracy.)

Ākhun sāhib chu tsāṭan hanzay tsuci bāgrān.

The school-master distributes the bread of the pupils. (E.g., the king spends what the people pay him in taxes, he having nothing of his own.)

Alāl-khānan na koj; parzanēn mimyuz.

To one's own dear children breakfast is not given; [but] to the strangers [besides breakfast] tiffin is served. (I.e., a person most niggardly towards his own kith and kin, but entertaining strangers sumptuously.)

Attri-wāna chu mushkay lārān.

Khāra-wāna chē tēmbarey lārān.

From a perfumer's shop one gets a pleasant scent,

From a blacksmith's shop one gets embers. (Cultivation of the society of good people will make you good. He who plays with the cat must expect a scratching.)

Baḍ kani chē lukacēv kanēv sati rūzit hēkān.

A big stone is kept firm by smaller stones. (E.g., a man of position must have subordinates to assist him).

Bhaṭṭa taryov kadala ta gāḍi dāryos ās.

A paṇḍit was passing over a bridge and a fish opened its mouth [to swallow him].
(Paṇḍits are generally weak physically because they do not take to manual labour,
but devote themselves much to study.)

Bīb kamālas ta mīr mazāras.

When the wife is grown up, the husband is in the grave. (An unequal marriage.)

Boni muḥul tārun.

To pierce a chinār with a pestle. (An impossible thing.)

Brāri sāleh.

Pious as a cat. (I.e., a hypocrite.)

Buhuri-bāyi hund kan hyū zehān.

Stretching out like the ear of the apothecary's wife.

(To go beyond the limit. An apothecary's wife is thought foppish: she wears
heavy ear ornaments, and her ears are stretched downwards by their weight.)

Cāy tani yā gani magar tats gatshi cēni.

Tea, whether weak or strong, should be taken hot.

Chaniy phar ta gontshan war.

Empty boast and twisted moustaches. (Smart clothes and empty pockets. The
loudest hummer is not the honey-bee.)

Dab laḡus ta phēran phuṭus.

Having tumbled down his garment got broken.

Dāli Bhaṭṭa ta Khoja thūl.

Dāl for a Paṇḍit and an egg for a Khoja (i.e., the kind of food they like).

Gora sanzi kotshi sori na zāh.

The guru's bag will never get exhausted. (Priests are ever prosperous, receiving
charity on all occasions, both happy and sad.)

Grahna kāndur.

A baker during an eclipse. (A sorry figure.)

“ Gur dītā paha.” “ Nīla chuy.” “ Nilay dītā.” “ Hīla chuy.”

“ Lend me thy horse.” “ It is cream-coloured.” “ Give me the cream-coloured.”
“ It is a pretence.”

Hānḥi wāli dōd ta gānḥi wāli thūl.

He is capable of causing milk to flow from a barren woman's breast and of fetching
down eggs from a kite's nest. (An adventurer.)

Hāri zyūn ta Māghi dhāni.

Firewood in Hār (June-July), and paddy in Māgh (January-February). (I.e., these
things should be purchased in those months, because wood is dry in June-July,
and paddy of better quality is obtainable in January-February, the cultivator
having disposed of all grain of bad quality before then, as it is human nature to
sell bad things first.)

Hēli peṭhuk shaqdar.

The guard just at the time the crop has begun earing. (Said of a person who takes no pains to earn money for himself, but feeds on others' earnings. Warming his hands in other peoples' sunshine.)

Kakawanay chē kani shrapān.

Partridges alone can digest a stone. (A strong person has a good appetite.)

Kāh gov doyanas kahi dohi chōk.

Hash chēm zām chēm kyā chum sukh ?

Eleven cows are milked, after eleven days I get a little milk ;

I have got a mother-in-law [and] sister-in-law : what peace have I got ?
(Mothers-in-law and sisters-in-law are notorious for ill-treatment of their daughters-in-law.)

Kālidāsa chu panani vizi wunān.

Kālidāsa falls into error in his own case. (I.e., a wise person sometimes makes a bad mistake.)

Kālidāsa, who was at the court of King Bhoja of Mālvā about the end of the tenth century A.D., is said to have gone to Ceylon to see the king of that island, named Kumāradāsa. This king was a good poet and had sent a copy of his own poem *Jānaki-harana* as a present to King Bhoja. This poetic work pleased Kālidāsa very much, and he became anxious to make the personal acquaintance of the author. He went to Ceylon and there he was staying in an old woman's house. King Kumāradāsa used to pay frequent visits to Mātara, and when he was there he always stayed in a certain beautiful house. During one of these visits he wrote two lines of unfinished poetry on the wall of the room where he had lived. Under it he wrote that the person who could finish this piece of poetry satisfactorily would receive a high reward from the king. Kālidāsa happened to see these lines when he came to this house in Mātara, and he wrote two lines of beautiful poetry under the unfinished lines of the king. He was in hope that his friend, king Kumāradāsa, would be well pleased with this and would recognize his friend's poetry. But the unfortunate poet had not the pleasure of getting either reward or praise from the king, because the authorship of the lines was claimed by a woman in the same house, who had seen Kālidāsa writing them. She secretly murdered Kālidāsa and claimed the reward, stating that the lines were her own. But nobody would believe that the woman could have written such poetry, which could have only been the work of a real poet. The king, when he saw the lines, said that nobody but his friend Kālidāsa would be able to understand him so well and to complete in such an excellent way the poetry which he (the king) had written, and he asked where Kālidāsa was, so that he might hand over to him the promised reward. Nobody knew where he was. At last search was made everywhere and, to the great sorrow of every one, his body, which had been hidden, was found. One can hardly imagine how sad King Kumāradāsa was when he heard that Kālidāsa had been murdered, for he had loved him much both as poet and as friend. A very grand funeral pyre was erected, and the king lit the pyre with his own hands. When he saw the body of his dear friend consumed by the flames, he lost his senses altogether through his great grief and, to the horror of all the people assembled, he threw himself on the funeral pyre and was burnt with his friend (see page 147 of *Stories from the History of Ceylon* by Mrs. Higgins).

Kāvas ta kani myul karun.

To make the crow and the stone join together. (Said of an unexpected occurrence.)

*Kāl, kâtsur, machilcal,
Dushmaney paighambar and.*

The dark-brown complexioned, the brown-haired, and the freckled
Are the enemies of the prophet (i.e., are found to be wicked).

*Khēv, chēv ranga-tsari ;
Anz lug wāla-bari.*

The cinnamon tree-sparrow ate [and] drank ;
[But] the grey goose was caught in the trap. (An innocent person caught instead
of the real offender.)

Kulas chē krit.

A high class person has to discharge obligations. (*Noblesse oblige.*)

Lēmbi phulmut pamposh.

A lotus bloomed out of the silt. (A beautiful child born of ugly parents.)

Lori hathū loyī ta marday drāk.

A hundred blows with a rod were dealt to thee, and thou provedst to be a brave
fellow. (To flatter a person after having once quarrelled with him.)

Lūk kami lāsuv ta buḍh kami mor ?

Who would think that the young might live and the aged might die ? (Death is no
respector of age.)

Magghi mo gatsh māgasey.

Do not go even to a feast during the *Māgha nakṣatra*. *Note.*—The *Māgha nakṣatra*
(10th mansion of the moon) is considered inauspicious by the Hindus for going
on a journey.

Māji bhatta.

Food served by mother. (The best food.)

Makkāy waf dīshil chu sawār guri peṭha wuthmut.

On seeing a cob of maize corn the rider has descended from his horse (the corn
being so tempting).

Muma, kon, sadān pānay put-mahārāza.

Muma, the one-eyed, burns within himself to be the vice-bridegroom (but he can-
not be chosen for this). (Said of a vainglorious person.)

Natsaha āngun chum isot ;

Gēvaha gēv khyom brāri.

I would dance [but] the courtyard is small ;

I would sing—the cat ate my ghī. (Idle excuses.)

Matshan dud ta monēn chak.

Milk in the breast and splashing it against the walls. (Prodigality ; waste.)

Nav kath navan dohan.

A new matter for nine days. (A nine days' wonder.)

Nāv chum Lasi,

Yasi wātsas na tasi.

Lasi is my name,

To whomsoever I did not attend, he is displeased. (One cannot please everybody.)

Nidyāris chī dugani dyār.

A penniless person has to spend double. (I.e., he borrows, paying high interest, and he purchases the necessities of life in small quantities, which costs him more.)

Qālib lari bunyul.

An earthquake to a *pakka* house (it cracks it). (A great calamity.)

Parbatas dhāni bhawun.

Growth of rice on [the top of a rocky or arid] hill. (An impossibility.)

Pénji chamb.

A platform [proved to be like] a precipice.

Rātuk lāyun gomo khām :

Lol ho ām, lol ho ām.

Yesterday's thrashing was not sufficient :

Love has seized me, love has seized me. (Cited when a person, with whom one has quarrelled, seeks reconciliation.)

Sera wāwa khula chu dera wāv.

Want of house is worse than want of food.

Shāwl kanit ta shālī hēt.

After the sale of a shawl and the purchase of *śālī* rice [one regrets, as the value of the former increases as it gets older, and better quality of the latter can be got by waiting a little longer].

Sēh kas be-pīr andar mulk-i-Kashmīr—

Wali-Haḍ o Hari-Bahādur, Sukha-Pīr :

Sēh kas dīgar zabūn tar and zānhān—

Yikey Ārgāmī, duwum Bhairau, siwum Bhān.

There were three cruel men in the country of Kashmīr—

Wali-Haḍ and Hari-Bahādur (and) Sukha-Pīr :

There are three greater devils than these—

First Ārgāmī, second Bhairau, third Bhān. (Beggars are a great nuisance in Kashmīr, and these three are cited as the greatest extortioners.)

Shurēv shri=doh sūriyo :

Vāntsaka dhaka chēva Shri-Pāntsam

O children! holidays are over :

To satisfy your desires there is the Śrī Pañcamī (5th of the dark fortnight of *Vaiśākha*, the last Hindu holiday of the year).

Shuri chu khormut un wanas ta kon brannas.

The child has made a blind man go to the forest and a one-eyed person climb a *brann* (elm tree) (A child cannot be appeased until his curiosity is satisfied.)

Tālawā pēyi nā tangā !

Would that a pear might fall down from the ceiling ! (A vain hope.)

Tālī tsēl.

Crown of the head pressed down. (I.e., in depressed circumstances).

*Thēkzi na hovari-ghari,
Yēti kulay wād kari.*

Do not boast in [your] father-in-law's house,
Where [your] wife will question [your] veracity. (I.e., one cannot boast before a person who knows all about one.)

Ṭar-bāza sanzi zēvi ta rāza sandis khizānas chu na ant.

There is no limit to the tongue of a braggart or to the Rāja's treasury.

Tsētr, Vahēk surtho putro ?

Did you put by, O son, for *Caitra* (March-April) and *Vaisākha* (April-May) ? (One should put something by for 'rainy days.')

Usa Ju gas chuy lor.

Hala ju, wothar'am.

"O Usmān Ju, filth is sticking to thee."

"Halloo, Sir, wipe it away, please." (Said of a lazy fellow.)

Uttara bunyul.

The earthquake of Uttar. (A great upheaval or commotion.)

Vetāla, wanay titāla hana, kava goham tsakhey ?

Osus na hēkân pānay pakit, phakal khortham nakhey !

O Vetāl! I shall say to thee a humble word—"Why didst thou become wrathful?" I was not able to walk; thou hast placed a stinky fellow on my shoulders to be carried! (Cited when one is overburdened with some other person's work.)

Wufawani guri ta naba tang raṭani.

To catch flying horses and pears from the sky. (Vain adventures; attempting to accomplish the impossible.)

Wani khānas khâtir pānas.

Wani Khân has his own likings. (Said of an obstinate and selfish person.)

Yēli ivân kâla ghattâ, na rozân zaṭâ na patṭâ.

When a black storm comes, there remains neither a rag nor a blanket. (I.e., everything vanishes on the approach of the days of adversity.)

Yâtay na pakân, nâtay ṭakân.

He would not even walk [now] on the contrary, he would run. (Said of inconsistency.)

Zana Mut ta Ismâ'il

Zanârdan and Ismâ'il. (Said of one who amasses wealth for a particular person. Zanârdan lived sixty years ago. He used to beg for a disciple of his named Ismâ'il, to whom, he said, he owed one lakh of rupees and to whom he had so far repaid only one cowrie.)

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(Continued from page 76 *supra*.)*Athaci ungaji pānts che na āsān hishey.*

The five fingers of the hand are not all equal.

(Used as meaning that all people are not alike, or that all do not attain the same rank in life.)

*Bhaṭṭa chu baḷlohiy zāts ;**Jaldai tatān tah jaldai tūrān.*A *paṇḍit* is of the nature of a brass vessel,

[Which] quickly gets hot and quickly gets cold.

(This is said with the meaning that a *paṇḍit* spends his money, when he gets it, too quickly, so that he soon comes to penury : this is regarded as a characteristic of the *paṇḍit* class.)“ *Bhutrāts māj ! gub kus ?* ”“ *Yus buth chalnay bhata khiyi ;**Brānda peṭha muthar kari ;**Dohali nendar kari ;**Graṭṭa tala oṭ khiyi.* ”

“ Mother Earth ! who is heavy ? ”

“ He who eats food without washing his face [is dirty] ;

[He who] urinates at the door-step [is lazy] ;

He who sleeps during the daytime [is slothful] ;

He who eats flour from the millstone [is greedy]. ”

Dāri kin anz tsāmūt, tontī kēt masāla phuṭaj hēt.

A grey goose flying in by the window, carrying in his bill a packet of spices (for use when it is killed and cooked).

(Said of a desire unexpectedly fulfilled.)

Dūmb Dēlinyuk Jāmbāzporyuk tāwāndār.

The Dūmb of Dēlina amerced for Jāmbāzpura.

(Said of an innocent person involved in trouble instead of another who is really guilty. Dēlina and Jāmbāzpura are two villages in the Bāramula Tahsīl, five miles apart.)

*Gagur pakān hul hul,**Par panani vāj kun syud.*

The rat runs in a zigzag course,

Yet straight towards its own hole.

(Said of a person who looks a simpleton, but is very careful where his own interests are concerned.)

*Goras āyov nāyid zangi :**Dupnas ; “ Buh ti be-mūlay tsa ti be-mūlay.”*

A barber came across a priest ;

The latter said : “ I carry on business without capital ; thou too art conducting business without capital (i.e., we are both equal). ”

Gor divān wuḍi ta wachas

Kāmbari-pachas drāv na kenh.

The priest is beating his head and breast

[Because] the fortnight of *śrāddha* did not last long.

(Referring to the first half of the month of Asoj, when Hindus make offerings to the priests in the name of their ancestors.)

Kānsēn zīṭhi ta zīṭhen kānsi gatshan āsani.

The young should have the elders, and the elders the young.

(Such a combination means happiness.)

Kashīr chē par-dwārac.

Kashmir is for outsiders.

(Outsiders have always exploited Kashmir, as its history shows. Its own inhabitants have ever been sadly neglected by unsympathetic foreigners.)

Kāv ai chēlzēn sazi sābaney,

Kāvas krañhnēl tsali na zāh.

Aslas tah kamīnas khislat naney

Hūni luṭ kandilas gond bani na zāh.

If a crow be washed even with vegetable soap,

Its black colour will never be removed from the crow.

The noble and the mean will disclose their intrinsic natures ;

A dog's tail can never change into a crest by being kept in a case.

Lūc kani chē baji kani tal vēpān.

A small stone fits in beneath a large stone (and then the latter becomes well laid).

(This is used as meaning, e.g., that an officer cannot work properly without the help of his subordinates.)

“ *Mājiy ! mām hai oy.* ”

“ *Myon, hov putra, boi.* ”

“ Mother ! my maternal uncle has come. ”

“ Yes, son, my brother. ”

Muṭh myūṭh kaṭas ;

Sas myūṭh Bhaṭṭas ;

Nēndar mīṭh drālid-kaṭas.

Beans are sweet to a ram ;

Pulse is sweet to a *paṇḍit* ,

Sleep is sweet to a lazy young man.

Nagara nīrit Pāndrenṭhan.

Going out of the city to Pāndrenṭhan.

(Said of going a very short distance, as Pāndrenṭhan is quite close to Śrīnagar.

The saying, however, can also be interpreted as meaning : Without leaving home, know thyself, i.e., be religious and pious without making any show.)

Pints-kāni dapān Wulur pāzah.

A finch boasts of draining the Wular Lake. (Said of a vain boast.)

Pitari gay mîsari-kandî—atsana bâz rozan na ;

Pitareni gayi martsa-pîpini—natsana bâz rozan na.

The male collaterals are like thorns : they will but prick (i.e., cause harm).

The female collaterals are like tops ; they will but dance (i.e., mock). (Collaterals are often envious of one another.)

Qarzan chu âb-i-hayât comut.

Debt has drunk the water of immortality.

(A debt must be paid sooner or later ; it remains a debt till repaid.)

Qarzun larza.

Oh, the terror of debt ! (Beware of contracting debt. Cf. *Gulistân*, chap. III, tale 9 :—

بتمناي گوشت خوردن بر کم تقاضاي زشت قصابان

“ It is better to die for want of meat than to endure the rude importunities of the butcher.”)

Shuri kor kâv kâv ; bab vèlhêv.

Baban kur kâv kâv ; shuri dup bab matêv.

The child cried ‘ Caw, caw ’ ; the father was delighted.

The father cried ‘ Caw, caw ’ ; the child said his father had gone mad.

Trakar chê na kânsi kanz mâs zi pâs karêš.

A scale is nobody’s maternal aunt, that it should be prejudiced in weighing.

Trats trits ta tre pañtshîy.

Slowly, slowly, and three *pañtshîy* earned.

(Slow and scanty earnings. *Pañtshîy* is the plural of *pāñtshu*, which is equal to 2 *bhaganis*, or 16 *kaurîs*).

Wodapuryuk begharaz.

An apathetic [person] from Wodapur.

(Used of a person who takes no interest in anything. Wodapur is a village in the Uttarmachipura Tahsil, the inhabitants of which are famed as being too simple to take an interest in anything.)

Wâgâmyuk Gopâl.

Gopâl of Wâgâm.

(Said of a very familiar person. Wâgâm is a village in the Śrî Pratâp Singhapura Tahsil, where lived a man named Gopâl, who used to visit everybody, generally uninvited.)

Yâtay na pakay : nâtay takay.

At one time I would not walk ; now, on the contrary, I would run.

(Said of a lazy person, who has suddenly become excessively active.)

Yusuy swâd phalis suy chu gurnas.

The same taste is in one [grape] as in a bunch [of grapes].

Zâr gav khwar.

Gambling is ruinous.

Zar taşadduq-i-sar.

Wealth is meant for one’s enjoyment.

Ani hanza kori sat.

The seven daughters of the blind woman.

Note.—A blind woman beggar gave birth to seven daughters, and with the birth of each daughter she began to get more alms. (Cf. the English proverb, 'Give and spend, and God will send.')

Bhaṭṭa chuy gūli-kutsur, kanji pānas ta goji lākan.

The *pandit* is [like] a man cutting out kernels from water-chestnuts—the shells [he keeps] for himself, and the kernels [he sells] to the people.

(A *pandit* is unselfish.)

Dharmas karēn tsoci.

He changed his religion into bread.

(Said of an irreligious, worldly man.)

Dosi pethi taka-tak.

To run a race on the top of a wall.

(A hazardous attempt.)

Dumaṭṭas rīnz lāyin.

To shoot pellets on to a dome.

Cf. *Gulistān*, Ch. I:—

پړنو نیکان نه گیرد هر کم بنیادش بد است
قربیت نا اهل را چون گردگان برگنبد است

"A person having an evil origin shall not receive the enlightenment of the good ; To educate the worthless is like throwing balls upon a dome" (they will always roll down again).

Kali-yoga-ci baji-māji.

Elderly mothers of the *Kaliyuga*.

(Said of young girls who have become mistresses of houses.)

Kanawāji thas gav.

Yasi gav tasi gav.

The sound of an ear-ring [falling down] occurred.

It occurred to whomsoever it did occur.

Keñh na khuta chu keñtshāyi jān.

Something is better than nothing.

Kritsa kori baji-māji ta phoka-nēciv muqaddam.

Lasses collecting *krits* (a kind of yam, *Dioscorea deltoidea*) have become mistresses of houses, and simple lads, village headmen.

Māji māsi ta kori kus kāsī ?

To the mother [and] to the maternal aunt [it has happened thus], so who can prevent it [from happening] to the daughter ?

Māli sozayi kori progas dār kāsīt :

tamisanzi hashi dupas dār yiyas bēyi ;

kār kāsīt suzna zi bēyi yiyas na.

A father shaved his beard [and] sent it to his daughter as a present in place of money on the occasion of a festival : her mother-in-law remarked that he would grow

his beard all right again ; he did not cut and send his own head, lest he might not get another.

Note.—Hindu mothers-in-law were very exacting in taking customary money presents on the occasions of different festivals from their daughters-in-law's parents. These presents have now been greatly curtailed, thanks to the efforts of social reformers.

Mě chě pananěn māsān hanz khabaray.

I am fully acquainted with my maternal aunts (i.e., you need not trouble to give me any description of them).

Mitras gatshī tasund aib buthis pēt wanun.

A friend should be told his faults to his face.

Mitr lāgit shatru.

An enemy in the guise of a friend. (Cf. 'A wolf in lamb's skin.'

Cf. also "Evil-doer behind your back,

Sweet-tongued in your presence ;

Give up a friend of this ilk

As a pot of poison concealed by milk.")

Or mā gatsh yūri wola

Do not go there, come here.

(Said of attracting the rabble.)

Rupayī nishiy chē wātān rupay.

A rupee comes to a rupee. (Cf. the English proverb, 'Money begets money.')

Note.—A simpleton heard this proverb and thought that if he had a single rupee he could amass a fortune easily. He got one and went to a banker's shop. The banker had at that time a heap of rupees, which he was busily counting. There was a small hole in one of the walls of the shop. The simpleton hid himself behind this wall and thrust his rupee through the hole towards the banker's money, thinking that, by doing so, the rupees in the heap would be drawn towards his, and he would take them away. But his rupee accidentally slipped from his fingers and got mixed with the banker's money. Now the simpleton began to cry at the loss of his rupee. People collected and inquired the cause of his distress. He explained the whole thing to them. They smiled at his simplicity and told him that the proverb was true enough. Instead of the banker's rupees coming towards his rupee, his went to them, and so the proverb was fulfilled.

Saif-Ullah Mirāni safar.

Saif-Ullah Mir's [long account of his] travels.

(Used in reference to long and tedious descriptions, e.g., of a man's troubles and woes.)

Thak gav zi phak gav.

Stopped and stagnated.

(E.g., always taking out of the purse and never putting in soon empties it.)

Tshotun tsāv zi hotsun āv.

Exhaustion came and putrefaction set in.

(Said, e.g., when a man's income begins to decrease and he becomes involved in difficulties.)

Yâ zarav nata birav

Either suffer or else get away.

(Cf. the English proverb, 'What cannot be cured must be endured.')

Yithi pîra khota chu be-pîray jân.

It is better to be without a priest than with such a priest.

(Bad principle is worse than no principle.)

Zyûth gav byûth.

Too lengthy results in a dead stop.

(Cf. the British proverb, 'Too much is stark naught.')

MISCELLANEA

INDIA AND THE EAST IN CURRENT LITERATURE.

Acta Orientalia, XI, Pt. III (1933).—In this issue M. Mironov continues his interesting notes on Aryan Vestiges in the Near East of the 2nd Millenary B.C., dealing with names of persons, gods and places found in the Amarna letters (Palestine and Syria, 1380-1350 B.C.), and among the Mitanni (1475-1280 B.C.) and the Hittites (1400-1280 B.C.), and adding linguistic remarks on the phonology and morphology of the names, many of which have a special interest for Indian readers. Some guarded observations are made on the evidence revealed by this material. M. Mironov regards the Indian character of the numerals noted in the Hittite documents as obvious, and he points out that it seems possible to assign the forms to a particular stage of development of the Indian language, the date of those documents being known with fair precision (viz., not later than 1200 B.C.). Though the material be too scanty to permit of definite conclusions, he considers the forms "may be assigned to the language of the Veda, but they do not seem to be archaic, i.e., to belong to the oldest strata of the Vedic language." He is led to the view that the facts seem to corroborate the conclusion drawn by Sten Konow from the (supposed) fact of the Aśvins being mentioned in the Boghazkeui documents as groomsmen, that the extension of Indo-Aryan civilization into Mesopotamia took place after the bulk of the Ṛgveda had come into existence, and the oldest portions of that collection should accordingly be regarded as considerably older than the Mitanni treaty.

In the same issue Prof. Rapson replies to the arguments of Prof. Lüders (*Ib.*, X, pp. 118-125) regarding the date in the inscription on the Amohini Tablet at Mathurâ, and gives some additional reasons in support of his view that the decimal figure in the date is 40, and not 70 as Prof. Lüders thinks.

Acta Orientalia, XI, Pt. IV (1933) contains a paper by I. Scheftelowitz on 'The Mithra Religion of the

Indo-Scythians and its Connection with the Saura and Mithra Cults,' in which he sets forth in considerable detail the numerous analogies between the cult as originally practised by the Śakas and as introduced into India, and quotes many references that throw light upon the spread and development of the cult in India and the effects of Brāhmanical influences. Many aspects of this interesting subject, which had been so succinctly and ably outlined in Pt. II, Chap. xvi, of the late Sir R. G. Bhandarkar's *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism*, etc. (*Grundriss* series) will be found to be elaborated in this paper. The difficult question of the period at which the cult was actually started in India remains, however, to be definitely solved.

Zeitschrift der D.M.G. (N. S. XI, Pts. 1 and 2), 1932.—In a paper entitled 'War Marco Polo auf dem Pamir,' W. Lentz states his reasons for holding that Marco Polo did not cross the Pāmirs, as hitherto generally accepted (e.g., by Yule, Cordier, Stein and others), but, having reached Ishkashm, he turned north by the valley of the Ab-i-Panja as far as the Wanj valley, and ascending it and crossing the Akbai Sitargi entered the Khingâb valley, whence he passed over the Gardani Kaftar into the Alai valley, which he followed, in a more or less easterly direction, and so on to Kāshgar. He holds with Benedetto, that Scasem, and not Casem, is the correct reading, and that M's town was Ishkashm, and not Kishm. Marco's Voca (one MS. reads Voca), hitherto always equated with Wakhân, he locates in the Khingâb valley, to portions of which we find the name Wakhiâ ('upper' and 'lower') locally applied, according to Stein (*Innermost Asia*, II, 890). Suffice it to add here that, while the suggested route is attractive as being less perilous, there are many objections to accepting this as the route described in Marco's narrative, even as it appears in Benedetto's revised text.

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is no substantial physical barrier, no clearly defined belt of cultural transition, except perhaps at Delhi and on the threshold of Bengal. In the south the boundaries of Tamil, Marāṭhī and Gujarāṭī are well defined by wide zones of rough country. Mārāṭhī is separated from Kanarese and Telugu by the line between lava and gneiss. Only the Kanarese—Telugu frontier is ill-defined.

The geography of Upper India favours uniformity of culture, but the area is too vast for political cohesion; even the Mughals held it together with difficulty. The smaller and better defined geographical units of the Peninsula foster cultural variety and the development of conscious and politically well-knit nationalities. On the other hand, Northern India is open to the impact of foreign influences from the West and Central Asia. Such impacts, whether destructive or creative, reach the Peninsula either from Upper India (at reduced voltage) or by sea; and the sea-borne impacts are rarely transmitted through the Western Ghats. The direction along which cultural currents travel is governed by permanent geographical factors. Their effect varies with the distance from source and the cultural medium through which they pass; but the medium is sufficiently continuous to ensure that, whatever changes may occur, the product is unmistakably Indian.

KĀSHMĪRĪ PROVERBS.

BY PAṆḌIT ANAND KOUL, ŚRĪNAGAR, KASHMĪR.

(Continued from p. 199 *supra*, and concluded.)

Apis dani mushkil pēni.

A lump of flesh given to a person of low degree is difficult for him [to eat]. (i.e., out of vanity he becomes more concerned to display it to others than to eat it himself.)

Azmormut gav povmut.

One [who has been] tested is [easily] vanquished. (e.g., even a proud person is apt to yield to a person who knows his secrets.)

Begāri ti gatshi bronthui gatskun.

Even to perform impressed labour, it is well to go early. (e.g., an old prisoner may become a warder, vested with authority over prisoners who have come in later.)

Begāri ti gatshi jān pāṭhi karani.

Even impressed labour should be performed properly. (i.e., it should be a first principle in life to perform with all earnestness the work we have to do.)

Chēnīy phar ta gontshan war.

Vain bragging and twisting of moustaches. (Used in the sense of 'smart clothes and empty pockets.' Cf. the Hindī, *ghar kī korī mūcheñ hī mūcheñ haiñ*.)

Dohay doh chi na hihīy āsān.

All days are not equal. (Cf. 'Christmas comes but once a year.')

Dudarthāmyuk hak ?

[Is it the truth, or is it merely] drift wood of Dudarthāma ?

Note.—*Hak* has a double meaning here, viz., 'truth,' and 'drift wood.' At Dudarthāma, 14 miles north of Śrīnagar, drift wood is collected in large quantities from the Sindh river.

Jinnas ku-jinn.

A demon met by a more ferocious demon. (Said of a wicked person having to deal with a person more wicked than himself. Cf. the saying, 'diamond cuts diamond'.)

Kāni kar kāni ach kathin gilan,

Sheth sās shaitān tut kut pilan.

The one-eyed made a hard wink with his blind eye,
How can even sixty thousand Satans attain to that height ?

Kūl, kātsur ta machi-t'cal dushman Paighambar.

The dark, the brown-haired and the freckled [is] the enemy of the Prophet.

Explanation.—This saying has reference to Shimar, one of Yazīd's generals, who was of this complexion, and who slew Husain, the second of the two sons of 'Alī and grandson

of Muhammad, on the plain of Qarbalâ ; hence a person of this complexion is reproached as being by nature vile and infamous.

Kûr gayi tîr—gût kamân-kash kash kaḍēs tyût thud wâti.

A daughter is like an arrow, [which] will reach as high as the archer can shoot it.

Explanation.—The marrying of a daughter to a great man's son depends upon the amount of the dowry that can be given her by her parents.

Kâkani kâkani karahan ghara, amma yârabal-kâkani dinak na karana.

The wives of brothers would live [peacefully] together, but the women who meet them at the *ghât* will not let them. (*i.e.*, these women ever gossip and delight in sowing seeds of discord.)

Kûris ta krûthis chi sâriy khotsân.

All are afraid of the malevolent and the malignant.

Mê kun zan tsê kun wuchân, shâris shor andriy âsân.

Looking towards me, [but in reality] looking towards thee, the squint-eyed [is] tainted internally.

Note.—Compare with this the Hindî proverb, *sau meñ phûlâ, hazâr meñ kânâ, sarâ lâkh meñ eñchâ-tânâ*, meaning, 'of persons with leucoma in the eye, only one in a hundred ; of the one-eyed, only one in a thousand ; of the squint-eyed, only one in a lakh and a quarter can be trusted.' Cf. also the Shâhâbâd proverb quoted by Mr. Oldham in *Folklore*, XLI, No. 4, p. 340.

Navi nawân ta prâni prânân.

The new are becoming newer, and the old older.

Explanation.—This is said, in jealousy, by old servants of new servants, or by children of a deceased wife in regard to their step-brothers and step-sisters.

Purmut jinn.

A demon, and literate to boot. (The idea being that a wicked person becomes worse if he receives a little education.)

Pyud shâl gav pâdar-sah.

A tame jackal is [equal to] a lion. (*e.g.*, a servant acquainted with his master's secrets and shortcomings becomes dangerous.)

Qiblas kun gayam zanga.

My feet happend to turn towards Mecca.

Explanation.—Muhammadans bow their heads in prayer towards Mecca. To stretch the feet towards that city would savour of irreverence. The saying is used by way of repentance for rudeness towards an elder.

Shâyi chukho zi jâyi chukho.

If at home, thou art in the [safest] place. (Cf. the English proverb, 'East or west, home is best'; and J. H. Payne's line, 'Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.')

Tsâr gav tamâcha 'Izrâ'il.

A thief is a blow from the Angel of Death.

Wanana wanana chu koh tâni nashân.

Even a hill is worn away by talking and talking. (Said of a talkative, stingy person). Cf. the English proverb, 'Constant dropping wears the stone'; also the Indian proverb, 'By continual use the rope cuts the curbstone of the well.'

Woth ai tshana ta sûda kami ?

If I leap down (*i.e.*, incur risk), what will be the gain ? (Cf. the English saying, 'Look before you leap.')

Yuthuy zuwa tithuy suwa.

As much as I can afford I shall sew (*i.e.*, make clothes to wear). (Cf. the English proverb, 'Cut your coat according to your cloth'; also the Italian, 'According to your purse govern your mouth.')